

The Brooklyn Paper

Brooklyn's Real Newspaper

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AWP/16 pages • Vol. 31, No. 2 • Saturday, Jan. 12, 2008 • FREE

EDITOR OF THE YEAR!



Our intrepid — and award winning — editor, Gersh Kuntzman, in Iowa last week.

SNA tabs Gersh as leader of pack

The Brooklyn Paper

Just a few months after The Brooklyn Paper was named "Newspaper of the Year," Paper Editor Gersh Kuntzman was named "Editor of the Year" by a national newspaper association on Thursday.

The Suburban Newspapers of America, which represents nearly 2,400 daily and weekly newspapers in both urban and suburban markets, cited Kuntzman as the country's top weekly editor for providing the "most focused and sharply written coverage" and for "good exploratory stories and graphics."

On hearing the news, Kuntzman, 42, was atypically humble. "An editor doesn't win awards like this alone," he told The Paper's staff, which had gathered in the newsroom. "The only reason I was not nominated is because of the amazing work everyone here is doing. Now, get back to work."

It's been a pretty good year for The Brooklyn Paper. In August, The Paper was named "Newspaper of the Year" by the SNA. And a month later, the Independent Free Press of America gave Kuntzman and Brooklyn Paper Senior Editor Vince Dimiceli top prize for editorial writing.

The SNA award will be presented at the group's spring conference next month in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., which sounds like a really nice place to pick up an award.

CK 'EM UP

City: Put middle school in House of D

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

The city wants to open a new middle school — in jail.

Developers responded so weakly to a city invitation for ideas for retail and residential use at the soon-to-reopen Brooklyn House of Detention that the city is now considering putting a middle school in the space.

For months, the city has said it plans to reopen — and double the capacity of — the 11-story, 750-inmate Big House on Atlantic Avenue between Smith Street and Boerum Place. But last year, when the city solicited bids for ground-floor shops in the infamous holding pen, retailers showed only lukewarm interest.

Besides the weak response from retailers, only one developer submitted a bid to build a residential tower adjacent to the soon-to-reopen jail.

As a result, Corrections Commissioner Martin Hoenig told a group of local police and community activists at a Jan. 2 meeting that he is considering housing a new middle school in the jail.

Councilman David Yassky (D-Brooklyn Heights) strongly supported



The Brooklyn House of Detention could house a public middle school.

the idea, according to people who attended the meeting at Borough Hall. Yassky's support for a jailhouse middle school follows his opposition to a plan by DUMBO developer David Walentas to include a middle school in his proposed Dock Street apartment tower because part of that building might block some views of the Brooklyn Bridge.

"David's position has always been that we need a new middle school in the general Downtown area," said Sam Rockwell, Yassky's spokesman, adding that the councilman would certainly consider the school-in-a-jail concept.

"It's bizarre," said one participant in the meeting. "Retailers don't want to be in the building, yet Yassky would put our kids there?"

TALE OF THE TAPE

HOUSE OF DETENTION	Institution	SCHOOLHOUSE
Convicted criminals, whether they like it or not.	Who's inside	Children, age 11-14, whether they like it or not.
Taxpayer dollars	Financing	Taxpayer dollars
While awaiting court dates	Terms	While awaiting high school
Warden, guy with shiv	Who to watch for	Principal, bullies
Sloppy Joe	Favorite lunch	Sloppy Joe
Crime doesn't pay, who your friends are, and that you should never try to break out on a rainy day using a gun made out of a bar of soap.	What you learn on the inside	Reading, writing, how to pop a pimple, and that your parents are right when they call it "the awkward years."



Coney beaut

Miss Cyclone, Angie Pontani, was one of 200 people at a hearing about the city's Coney Island plan — where the main opponent, state Sen. Carl Kruger, was shouted down. Page 6.

Pols: Pull Ratner off the trough

MSG subsidy is little compared to A'Yards

By Gersh Kuntzman
The Brooklyn Paper

A City Council effort to reign in a tax break enjoyed by Madison Square Garden should bring about a cutback of the massive public subsidies lavished on Atlantic Yards developer Bruce Ratner, two councilmembers demanded this week.

After the Council's Finance Committee discussed MSG's \$11-

million-per-year property tax abatement on Monday, Councilmembers Letitia James (D-Fort Greene) and David Yassky (D-Brooklyn Heights) demanded that the city and state revisit its subsidies for Ratner's \$4-billion mega-development.

"If you think the MSG deal is far worse," Yassky, an early Ratner supporter, told The Brooklyn Paper. Critics of MSG's 25-year-old

property-tax abatement say it has cost the city just under \$300 million since 1982.

But Yassky pointed out that the city has already allocated \$305 million to help build the proposed Atlantic Yards basketball arena, plus agreed to tax breaks that will bring the package to at least \$500 million.

"So this is a much worse deal than MSG," he said. "If we are going to scrutinize MSG, we have a responsibility to do the same for Atlantic Yards."

Both councilmembers said they would put forward a resolution within days that would "scrutinize the effectiveness all of these tax breaks citywide," James said.

She questioned, for example,

MORE YARDS • Meet the Yards ombudsman on page 14
• Atlantic Yards quiz show set

why Ratner still gets tax breaks for his decades-old Metrotech complex and both his Atlantic Avenue shopping malls.

"He may have needed those subsidies in the past, but Brooklyn is hot right now, so these subsidies are inappropriate," she added.

Yassky and James have called on Speaker Christine Quinn, who is spearheading the attack on the MSG subsidy yet is also a strong Atlantic Yards supporter, to bring the resolution to a vote.

It is unclear what would happen even if a City Council resolution

passes. Any effort to trim or eliminate subsidies to MSG or Atlantic Yards would require approval in Albany.

The MSG deal was created in 1982, when the owners of the arena argued that if they didn't get property tax relief, they would take the Knicks and Rangers out of New York City. At the time, it seemed like a plausible threat.

But now, money is flowing into Madison Square Garden, thanks to a privately funded renovation of the "World's Most-Famous Arena" in the 1990s and a huge influx

of revenue from cable TV, luxury boxes and higher ticket prices. Meanwhile, opponents have turned their attention to the Atlantic Yards arena, which, unlike the Madison Square Garden renovation, will be built with public money.

The Independent Budget Office said that when its bean counters crunch the numbers, MSG's tax break is greater than the \$140 million in subsidies that Atlantic Yards will receive over 40 years — but that figure does not include the \$305 million in direct city and state infrastructure improvements, a spokesman for the IBO said.

It also does not take into account that Ratner will not pay property tax. See **A'YARDS** on page 14.



The Brooklyn Paper / Curt Tuck

Beam them to BAM, Scotty

Trekkiess are in heaven with 'Picard' as Macbeth

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

Fans of "Star Trek" will boldly go where few have gone before — into the Brooklyn Academy of Music, no less — to see Captain Jean-Luc Picard (sometimes known as Patrick Stewart) flex his sinewy theatrical muscles in Shakespeare's "Macbeth."

The Patrick Stewart Network, the actor's officially sanctioned fan club, is sending 70 of its 300 members to the Feb. 22 performance of "that Scottish play" — about half of them theater buffs who, thanks to Stewart's role in "Star Trek," became Trekkies.

"He's just got that rare talent that can captivate an audience," gushed Kathleen Scanlon, the Philadelphia-based vice president of the network. And try not to open those hailing fr-

quencies when you see his perfectly molded, ghostly white cranium.

For those unfamiliar with the peculiar allure of the gentleman often referred to as the Sexiest Bald Man Alive, here's some background:

Between 1987 and 1994, Stewart starred as the strong yet sensitive Captain Picard in "Star Trek: The Next Generation," an incarnation of a sci-fi series that has inspired delicious devotion amongst its fans — so delicious in fact, that some even get in character, donning Vulcan ears and furry masks before attending "conventions."

Stewart later reprised the role in four films, the best of which was "Star Trek: First Contact."

Councilman Lewis Fidler (D-Camden) isn't a member of the Network, but he's heard him talk, and you sorta wonder why not.

"Stewart is more than a cult figure," said Fidler, who has almost every "Star Trek" episode on videotape or DVD, plus a small model Starship Enterprise, and in his office, a poster called "Ten Things I Learned from Star Trek" (one lesson? "Beware of your enemies. Like Romulans, they often come cloaked").

"I consider myself a fan and not a fanatic, but I'd love to meet Captain Picard," said Fidler.

Indeed, Fidler so badly wants to meet Picard (er, Stewart) that he said he might even go so far as to attend the show at BAM.

"I'm a little bit more excited that he's coming to Brooklyn than I am that they're putting on 'Macbeth,'" said Fidler. "Let me put it this way. If Patrick Stewart weren't in it, I wouldn't remotely consider going."

Janet Dairo, a Long Island-based

freelance cartoonist and Network member, is a bit more decisive. She'll be there. No question.

"I always loved the old 'Star Trek' series, and when Stewart started in 'Star Trek,' it enhanced my Trekkism," said Dairo, who first discovered Stewart when he did "Dune," another sci-fi fantasy, and "Lady Jane," a historical drama. He has the audience in the palm of his hand," she added.

Indeed, Stewart may be a cult hero to Trekkies, but to the larger creative world, he is one of the great Shakespearean actors of our time. In addition, his one-man staging of "The Christmas Carol" in the late 1990s, in which he gracefully moved through more than 30 different characters, remains legendary.

But Stewart's popularity isn't just a recent boost after his star turn in "Trek." See **PICARD** on page 14.

Supermarket could come to 'park'

High-end grocer is sought for Furman Street building

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

Suddenly, there's going to be a supermarket in Brooklyn Bridge Park.

The developer of One Brooklyn Bridge Park, a 449-unit residential building within the 85-acre waterfront development is negotiating to get a grocery store in his building, which is at the corner of Furman and Joralemon streets and an anchor of the park plan.

Even supporters of the condo, commercial and open-space development consider a supermarket a bad idea.

"I don't think it's the most complimentary business for the park," said Judy Stanton, executive director of the Brooklyn Heights Association.

Planners' original dream of a waterfront park stretching 1.3 miles from the Manhattan Bridge to Atlantic Avenue has morphed into a revenue-generating enterprise under a state

mandate that the site's maintenance budget come from economic activity on the site rather than from the state's general treasury.

As a result, park planners added in condos into the park's footprint. Fees on residents of those condominiums — and taxes collected at their super-

market — are supposed to cover the maintenance costs. The Brooklyn Bridge Park supermarket won't be just another bodega, promised Ian

Levine, a spokesman for the building's owner, Robert A. Levine.

"Our initial push is for a high-end market with prepared food," Levine said. Then, referring to the park's self-financing mandate, he added, "Unfortunately, the park would not come to fruition without us."

Still, the pronouncement reignited the controversy around Brooklyn Bridge Park and renewed criticism of the funding scheme that, support-

ers say, makes it all possible.

Parks should not be self-sustaining," said Ken Bar, chair of the Atlantic Chapter of the Sierra Club. "They are public amenities. All the land within the park should be devoted to recreational space."

But they are fighting a losing battle, because the city and state have signed off on the plans, though a lawsuit is pending. Demolition within the footprint is set to begin as ear-



Councilman Bill DeBlasio

Where's the Bill?

Constituents wonder what DeBlasio's doing ... in Iowa

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

You win some votes, you lose some votes.

Constituents of Councilman Bill DeBlasio blasted the political animal for spending most of the past two weeks campaigning for Sen. Hillary Clinton in Iowa and New Hampshire.

"I'd like to think that our council members are spending their time trying to solve city issues,"

said Eric McClure, a member of Park Slope Neighborhood, echoing a widespread sentiment.

DeBlasio and several staffers were in Clinton County, Iowa, from Dec. 27 until Jan. 3, to help get out the vote for New York's junior senator (who did win the county, though she lost the state's caucus to Illinois Sen. Barack Obama). After briefly returning to his Brooklyn district, DeBlasio and his retinue hurried to Dover,

See **DEBLASIO** on page 14.

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Villains ring in '08 with crime

The Brooklyn Paper

78th Precinct

New Year's Eve is a popular time for parties to practice their hedonistic art, but it also proved to be a good time for criminals to get to work.

At least five crimes — including an assault, two break-ins, a purse-snatching, and a car theft — all occurred in Park Slope in the hours just before or just after the ball dropped in Times Square. Here's a roundup:

- Two thugs used a possibly fictitious bump on the street as a pretext for beating up a man on Fifth Avenue hours after the new year began.
- The 33-year-old beating victim told cops that he was walking near the corner of 11th Street at around 3:40 am on Jan. 1 when a 22-year-old man came over and said, "Why'd you bump me?" before punching him in the head with a foreign object. A second perp, also 22, stood watch, cops said.
- The injured man was taken to New York Methodist Hospital on nearby Seventh Avenue.
- A Seventh Avenue resident got the fright of her life when she entered her living room and found herself face to face with a would-be thief seconds after the new year started.
- The 54-year-old woman told cops that she walked into the living room at 12:01 am — while Dick Clark was still saying "Happy New Year" — and found the 5-foot-4, 180-pound man standing there.
- "I'm leaving, I'm leaving," the would-be thief said — and then did just that, exiting the home, which is between Lincoln and Berkeley places, the way he came in: through the window.
- A Long Island woman ringing in the new year at a Second Street restaurant had her bag stolen when she used the bathroom an hour after the bath-

POLICE BLOTTER

new year began.

The 28-year-old told police that she was in the restaurant, a popular place for Cajun pizza and really good margaritas between Seventh and Eighth avenues, at around 1 am when she went to the bathroom. When she returned, her handbag was missing — along with her credit cards, \$200, a BlackBerry, an asthma inhaler and a cellphone charger.

The thief swiped a laptop from an apartment on Berkeley Place between Seventh and Eighth avenues on Dec. 31 — thanks to a front door that can be opened with just a credit card, the victim told cops.

• A man who parked his Jeep Wrangler on Sixth Avenue near St. Johns Place at 8:15 am on Dec. 31 returned nine hours later to find that it had been stolen.

Bank bust

A handoff who fled a Seventh Avenue bank on Dec. 31 with close to \$2,000 was caught two days later, cops said.

Police say the 45-year-old man entered the Astoria Federal Savings branch at President Street on Dec. 21, pried open a vault and took out \$2,000 in cash, cops said.

84th Precinct

A woman was slashed with a razor after an argument at the criminal courthouse on Jay Street on Jan. 3.

Two women, both 27 years old, were arguing in a courtroom at around 10 am when the suspect reached out and cut the victim's left arm, cops said.

Court slash

Police arrested the suspect at the courthouse and found a razor blade tucked in her waistband. The woman was charged with assault, cops said.

Motor-psycho

Cops nabbed a would-be motorcycle thief red handed at the corner of State and Smith streets on Jan. 4.

The victim, who lives on Prospect Park West, called police at around 9 pm when he saw the thief trying to hot-wire the chopper.

Copy c-aper

Someone stole a \$20,000 copy machine from an Atlantic Avenue office building on Jan. 3, cops said.

The victim told police he was going in and out of the building as he moved items from his office. When he returned from one trip to the new location, he noticed the copier was missing.

Brick burg

A burglar tossed a brick through the glass door of a bar at the corner of Third and Atlantic avenues on Jan. 2 and made off with \$800 in cash.

Police found the bar's living room chandelier had been shattered along with the glass. They also found the cash missing.

Bail me out

A woman who owns a bail bond business on Atlantic Avenue had her purse stolen from her office, probably by one of the perps she bailed out, around 1 pm on Jan. 2.

The victim lost four credit

Standoff! Slope comes to halt as man with shotgun goes nuts

By Gersh Kuntzman
 The Brooklyn Paper

Ninth Street was locked down late on Sunday, Jan. 6 and early into the next morning after an emotionally disturbed — and possibly drugged out — man fired a shotgun inside his house.

Cops eventually arrested the gunman and charged him with weapons possession, harassment, menacing and reckless endangerment — but not until six hours after he started the standoff by terrorizing members of his family with a knife, police records show.

Police were called to the home, between Seventh and Eighth avenues, at around 8:20 pm after getting a call about a man with a knife.

Once at the apartment, the man's mother, father and sister, who also live in the building, told cops that the man was on drugs and "acting erratically."

They also told the two officers that there was a shotgun in the house. Hearing that, the cops got the family out of there and called for backup.

Officers from the Emergency Services Unit took up a tactical position on Ninth Street, and the suspect fired off two rounds from the shotgun, though it is unclear if he was firing at the officers.

At that point, cops set up an inner and outer perimeter and called in the hostage negotiation team.

After eight hours of negotiations, the suspect finally surrendered and was taken to Kings County Hospital for a psych evaluation, cops said.

The arrested man was identified by police and the District Attorney's office as David Shields, 30. The gun and the knife were recovered as evidence, cops said.

cards, three wallets and a pocketbook, but no cash.

— Adam F. Hutton

76th Precinct

All burg, no bite

A gun-wielding robber left an entry on Dwight Street, between Wolcott and Dikeman streets, empty-handed at 7 pm on Dec. 19, despite his violently menacing words to a employee.

The would-be robber entered the restaurant and hollered, "Go behind the counter and give me the money or I'll shoot you!"

Behind the counter went the teenage worker, but instead of emptying the cash register, he dialed 911, which caused the perp to flee.

3-buck stick-up

A criminal robbed a man at gunpoint on the corner of Van Brunt and Coffey streets in the wee hours of the morning on Dec. 29 for a grand total of \$3.

The robber had a silver handgun and, at 1:40 am, told the 54-year-old victim to "Give me your money."

The man handed over what cash he had, which was only \$3, and the thief ran away.

Caught in act

Police apprehended a purse-snatcher after he knocked down a woman on Commerce Street on Dec. 28.

Curtis Daniel smashed into the

47-year-old woman, sending her falling to the ground and causing minor injuries before he stole her purse at around 12:30 pm.

But moments later, the thug was arrested when a plainclothes officer caught him as he fled — still holding the lady's pocketbook.

The purse and all of its contents were recovered.

68th Precinct

School bully

A Fort Hamilton HS student who was asked to remove his cap indoors on Jan. 4 went berserk and assaulted a school security officer, police say.

The incident began at 1 pm when the teen was told about the headgear restrictions. In short order, he began yelling and screaming in the hallways, though he did not turn violent until a school security officer tried to escort him to the dean's office.

That's when the teen tore off the officer's shirt and punched him in the face, screaming, "I'm a boxer! You're not a real cop!"

The teen was arrested for assault, cops said.

Armed rob

A thief stuck a gun against the stomach of a Fourth Avenue resident, encouraging her to hand over more than \$2,000 on Jan. 6, cops said.

The 46-year-old woman told

cops that she was approaching her apartment building, near 84th Street at 2 am, when the thug followed her inside.

He threatened her with the gun, grabbed her handbag and fled, cops said.

Missing gun

A 67-year-old man left his handgun on a shelf at a Fort Hamilton Parkway gun store on Dec. 19 — and by the time he remembered where he left it, it was gone!

Police are investigating the club's records, which list the names of everyone who enters the building, which is near 67th Street.

Break it up!

A 25-year-old man who tried to break up a fight on Third Avenue ended up getting stabbed under his left armpit.

Police say that the man intervened in the 3 am fight, which broke out between 88th and 89th streets on New Year's morning, but was nixed by a knife.

He was rushed to Lutheran Medical Center for treatment.

Big burg

A thief got away with quite a haul — \$32,000 in cash and jewelry — after breaking into a 65th Street apartment on Jan. 4, cops said.

The 46-year-old tenant told police that he returned home at 8 pm to find that the front door

See CRIME on page 14

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HEIST! \$1M-worth of jewels lifted in Billyburg kidnap

By Adam F. Hutton
 The Brooklyn Paper

A jeweler was kidnapped at gunpoint in the Hasidic section of Williamsburg on Dec. 31 and forced to drive to his warehouse at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, where his capers stole more than \$1 million worth of gold and jewels.

The jeweler, who asked not to be identified by The Brooklyn Paper out of fear that he and his family would be targeted again, told cops that two men flagged him down at the corner of Wythe Avenue and Williamsburg Street and asked for directions to the Brooklyn Bridge.

Before the victim could answer, the men jumped in the car, one of them brandishing a handgun, and forced the upscale jewelry dealer to drive to his Flushing Avenue warehouse.

Once there, they forced him to disable the security cameras and burglar alarms before they cleaned out the place.

The victim, who has been importing gold and diamonds since the 1970s, then drove the robbers to Clinton Avenue, about five blocks from the warehouse, where they had a van parked under the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway.

The robbers unloaded their ill-gotten booty and made a clean getaway without firing a shot.

The jeweler told police that he didn't know the men who kidnapped him, although they certainly knew him and his business.

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BROOKLYN POLITICS

THE SMOKE-FILLED ROOM

Panel: Guardian stole, but Hynes won't prosecute

By Dana Rubinstein

The Brooklyn Paper

A court-appointed attorney who plundered the fortune of former Judge John Phillips has been temporarily stripped of her license to practice law — but District Attorney Charles Hynes won't commit to opening a criminal investigation into her wrongdoings.

Hynes claimed he was protecting Phillips, a retired Civil Court judge and a potential political rival, when his office had the then-77-year-old former judge declared mentally incompetent and his estate placed in the hands of court-appointed guardians. But it was guardian Emami Taylor who posed the real threat.

Taylor, who served as Phillips's guardian from 2003 to 2006, failed to account for \$328,000 that she withdrew from Phillips's account and was not willing to cooperate with the committee investigating her guardianship of Phillips's estate.

As a result, the New York State First Appellate Division suspended Taylor's license on Dec. 27 in a hastily worded decision.

"While [Taylor] was entitled to be compensated for the work she performed, self-help to guardianship funds is not the way to proceed," the five-judge panel wrote.

The panel also questioned why Taylor failed to file tax returns for the estate, what happened to Phillips's Social Security and pension payments, and why several of Taylor's relatives were compensated for "services" they allegedly provided, including Taylor's mother, who was paid for serving as a "self-styled" nurse in charge of Phillips's care.

Despite all these allegations, Hynes's office would not commit to reopening its investigation of Taylor, which was closed in 2006 after Hynes's staff determined that "the evidence did not demonstrate that respondent committed a crime."

"I couldn't say [we would investigate]," said Joseph Bruno, a spokesman for Hynes.

"We wouldn't talk about that kind of thing. We wouldn't want to say whether we would or would not investigate."

Taylor was the longest-serving of the round-robin of guardians that followed Hynes's staff's successful move to have Phillips — who was considering a run against the long-serving District Attorney — declared mentally incompetent in 2001.

At the time, Hynes's staff said it was concerned that unscrupulous types were plunder-

ing Phillips's substantial estate. But Hynes has never prosecuted anyone for doing anything of the sort — yet under the guardianship of court-appointed lawyers, including Taylor, Phillips' estimated \$10-million estate virtually disappeared.

Now, Phillips is living in a Park Slope assisted living facility, while his current guardian sorts out his finances.

His supporters once again called on Hynes to prosecute someone for the crimes committed against Phillips.

"Hynes won't indict anyone," said John O'Hara, though Hynes actually did indict someone — O'Hara — for once voting from the wrong address.

But O'Hara looked on the bright side.

"The U.S. attorney may get her on tax charges, though," he said.

Taylor could not be reached for comment.



Gibran gets its boss

Controversial school has a new principal

By Dana Rubinstein

The Brooklyn Paper

The city appointed a teacher well-versed in Arabic to lead its first Arabic language and culture academy on Tuesday, filling a void in the school's leadership left by the forced resignation of the school's founding principal, Debbie Almontaser, in August.

Holly Reichert, a lifelong student of the Arabic language long-time educator, will replace interim principal Danielle Salzberg, who was hastily chosen to serve as Almontaser's temporary replacement despite her inability to speak Arabic.

In contrast, Reichert, 42, has a working knowledge of both modern Arabic and Egyptian colloquial Arabic, having worked extensively in the Middle East. Most recently, she worked for the city, giving literacy support to 17 teachers at 11 schools.

On Tuesday, Reichert demonstrated a different kind of literacy — the political kind. Despite a slew of questions about the Department of Education's handling of the Academy and its treatment of Almontaser, Reichert would only offer apologetic comments about the school's city- and state-approved curriculum, prompting Borough President Markowitz to later remark, "She's a smooth cookie."

Reichert did say that the school's political baggage didn't deter her from applying for the job.

"My life has been all about challenges," said Reichert. "I didn't hesitate at all."

"Things that happened before my appointment... I had no part of, so I won't comment on them," she added.

Indeed, controversy swirled around the Khalil Gibran International Academy since it was unveiled in February, first over where the school would be sited, but then over Almontaser herself.

In August, she defended an "Infidels NYC" girls T-shirt, saying that that the word "infidels" literally meant "shaking off" and explaining that the shirt was about female empowerment.

The damaging battle meant that the city's selection of a permanent replacement would be a fraught decision. Rosemary Stuart, the superintendent for the district that encompasses the Boerum Hill school, said

ally short of Ms. Almontaser's qualifications."

In all, there were 25 applicants for the job, an Education spokeswoman said.

The damaging battle meant that the city's selection of a permanent replacement would be a fraught decision. Rosemary Stuart, the superintendent for the district that encompasses the Boerum Hill school, said

THE REICHERT FILE

Holly Reichert has been chosen to run the controversial Khalil Gibran International Academy, the city's first Arabic language and culture school. Here's the scoop on the new teacher-in-charge.

Name: Holly Reichert

Age: 42

Last job: Teacher mentor for the Department of Education. Supported the efforts of more than 17 teachers in elementary, middle and high school.

Qualifications: Headed the English Department of a dual-language school in Bahrain; worked in Egypt and Syria; earned two masters degrees in education and a third in teaching English as a foreign language from the American University in Cairo.

Fun fact: Reichert worked as a Peace Corps volunteer in Yemen from 1991-1992.



she wanted someone with experience working with middle schoolers, and with the Arabic language and culture.

Reichert's appointment met with the approval of Lena Al-Hussini, the executive director of the Arab American Family Support Center, who called Reichert "the role model for what we want."

But Almontaser supporters remained firm that the Yemeni-born educator should have her job back — though the Department of Education refused to consider her when she reapplied.

"The [city] may point to all the qualifications of the new principal," said Carol Horowitz, also of Brooklyn for Peace. "What the [city] has failed to address is that the new principal's qualifications fall dramati-

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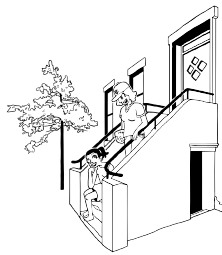
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THE STROOP

NEIGHBORHOOD REPORT

FORT GREENE

Drug clinic gets more oversight

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

Growing complaints about disorderly conduct outside a Clinton Hill methadone clinic have prompted two legislators, the clinic, and a state agency to create a neighborhood task force.

The Addiction Research and Treatment Corporation Clinic, on Fulton Street and Waverly Avenue, has been in the neighborhood since 1969. But thanks to a recent uptick in complaints about apparent drug dealers targeting clinic patrons, and an anecdotal (but not statistically) increase in petty crime, Councilwoman Letitia James (D-Fort Greene) and Assemblyman Ha-keen Jeffries (D-Fort Greene), met with state officials and the clinic itself to establish the task force.

"I will not allow my community to be held hostage to these individuals who don't respect it," said James.

Suzanne DeBrango, a boardmember of the Society for Clinton Hill and the secretary of her block association, walks her dogs every morning between 7 and 8 a.m. and said that at that hour, patients are already lining up for methadone. And where



Neighbors are complaining about this methadone clinic at the corner of Fulton Street and Waverly Avenue.

there are patients, she said, there are drug dealers.

"These drug dealers don't even try to hide the fact that they're selling drugs," said DeBrango.

Police disagree that the drug-dealing situation is as bad as it may seem. "Sometimes people call in because they see three or four people hanging out and automatically assume they're dealing drugs," Deputy Inspector Philip Stenizza of the 98th Precinct, said in November. "Sometimes they're just hanging out."

And Robert Sage, a spokesman for the agency that operates the clinic, said his patients are being scapegoated: "I'm not going to say there aren't a small number of our patients involved in some of these issues, but we're certainly not alone in this."

The clinic has an eight-person security force stationed within the building charged with making sure patients don't tinker. Then again, when members of the security force have approached alleged dealers, they've been threatened, Sage said.

For now, James has called for a cap on the number of patients.

COBBLE HILL

LICH docs: Set us free!

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

Doctors at Long Island College Hospital said the facility is faltering because its parent company is reportedly siphoning money to a Manhattan hospital also under its control.

This week, the doctors wrote to state Attorney General Andrew Cuomo to stop the bleeding, according to the New York Daily News.

In 1998, LICH became part of Continuum Health Partners, which also owns Beth Israel Medical Center. Since then, doctors claim that Continuum has been too secretive about the 150-year-old hospital's finances and will not reveal how \$83 million of a best designed to LICH's offers has been spent. They also say hospital equipment needs to be replaced.

"There's a feeling that our hospital, which is regarded as the premiere facility in LICH's medical bond, told the Daily News. Licht, president of LICH's medical bond, told the Daily News. The hospital declined to comment for this story.

DOWNTOWN



Illegally parked "official" cars are the bane of Brooklyn, but nowhere is the problem worse than on Jay Street in Downtown. Even with a placard (below), cars are not supposed to park in bus stops and at hydrants — but many do it with impunity.

Placard crackdown — can it work?

By Adam F. Hutton
The Brooklyn Paper

Mayor Bloomberg's plan to crack down on government workers who abuse their parking privileges will only succeed in Downtown Brooklyn if the NYPD makes good on its promise to ticket illegally parked permit-bearing cars, experts say.

The Bloomberg administration pledged last week to reduce the number of city-issued placards by 20 percent, but that promise could mean little in Downtown Brooklyn, the epicenter of illegal placard parking in the borough, because most cars parked in "No Standing" zones typically have permits issued by state or federal agencies.

"It's not the number of city permits that is the problem," said Wiley Novelli, a spokesman for Transportation Alternatives. "The problem has always been [that] permit abuse has never been subject to police enforcement."

A Brooklyn Paper investigation revealed the truth behind Novelli's comment. On Friday, a reporter went to Jay Street between Tillary and Willoughby streets and spotted a dozen cars, all displaying placards and all parked illegally. None of them got tickets.

The majority of those vehicles had placards issued by the New York State Courts.



Others had permits marked "Federal Law Enforcement." One of the illegally parked cars had no permit, but a state Corrections ID card on the dashboard. Another parking placard presented a New York State Fraternal Order of Police membership card and a Suffolk County Patrolman's Benevolent Association card — but no permit.

When Bloomberg made his announcement last week, Police Commissioner Ray Kelly promised that drivers who parked illegally would be punished.

Novelli said such enforcement would be welcome.

"What this comes down to is police giving tickets and commanders at the precincts

standing by those tickets," he said. "Now that they have word from One Police Plaza that parking abuse shouldn't be tolerated, we should see a reduction in abuse."

Downtown isn't the only neighborhood crying out for relief. Judy Stanton, executive director of the Brooklyn Heights Association, says parking permit abuse remains rampant in her neighborhood.

"Mayor Bloomberg and police officials are frequently quoted in the news as saying that they don't tolerate parking placard abuse, but that's hot air," Stanton said. "What I see is city cars with placards parking anywhere they please."

Stanton said that asking the NYPD to ticket other cops is like having the fox guarding the chicken coop.

"I think that enforcement should be given back to the Department of Transportation," she said. "You can't count on the police to ticket other police or judges or anyone else in law enforcement."

The city has issued at least 70,000 placards to its employees, but acknowledges that there are probably thousands more out there because it has allowed each agency to issue permits without keeping track. Bloomberg says that the power to issue permits will now rest only with the NYPD and the Department of Transportation.

PARK SLOPE

Cop: Muggers not singling out women

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

Park Slope's top cop is dismissing rumors that muggers have been targeting women walking by themselves.

Deputy Inspector John Arganziano, commanding officer of the 78th Precinct, said there were five more robberies in December compared to the year before, but women were not disproportionately targeted.

"Were there women robbed? Yes," said Arganziano. "But of 17 robberies, five victims were women and 10 were men. ... So women are not being targeted."

His statements contradict the rumors of a crime spree fanned by local bloggers and an e-mail from Ashkan Sahli, whose wife was mugged on New Year's Day.

According to the police report, two men followed his wife as she was walking south on Eighth Avenue near Second Street, grabbing her, snatching

her purse, and fleeing.

She lost her iPhone, iPod, credit cards and \$150. She was physically unharmed, but emotionally distraught. Her husband later told The Brooklyn Paper that he sent the e-mail to alert his neighbors to the danger.

"I decided, no way was this is not happening here," said Sahli on Wednesday. "This is a community, and the response has been incredibly supportive."

Sahli's story was echoed by an anonymous tipster, who told

Only The Blog Knows Brooklyn that she was mugged on Sunday night at around 10:30.

The good news is that the pep in that case was caught, Arganziano said. "Honor among thieves — he turned in his friend. Now we're doing line-ups."

For his part, Sahli said he was keeping a keen eye on his daughters. "We're more careful. We have a 13-year-old [who] graduated expansion of her freedom has stopped somewhat. It jolts, it surely does."

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BROOKLYN BUILDS

DEVELOPING STORIES

Kruger booed at Coney hearing

Assemblyman silenced by crowd; city offers insights into plan

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

The principal opponent of the city's plan to revitalize Coney Island was booed down at a public meeting on Monday night, prompting city officials to cut off the blustery politician mid-speech.

State Sen. Carl Kruger (D-Brigh-ton Beach) was the first in a parade of Brooklynites to come to the mic at a boisterous "public information ses-sion" at Lincoln HS, but he was the only one shouted down by the crowd.

Kruger later told The Brooklyn Paper that his opposition to the plan was based upon its unfeasibility.

"It's like so many concepts that the Bloomberg administration has put forward," said Kruger. "Why are we going through all of these gyrations of advancing a plan, get-ting people's hopes and aspirations up, creating a firestorm of contro-versy, instead of just advancing a simpler solution?"



State Sen. Carl Kruger was booed away from the microphone



Angie Pontani (aka Miss Cyclone) speaks at the Coney Island com-munity meeting on Monday night.

The majority of the dozens of speakers did not share Kruger's contention that Mayor Bloomberg's plan for the People's Playground represented "a crime committed on

our community." Rather, they expressed a tepid hope that the city's plan represents the best chance for the long-suffering amusement area to finally get

<http://HearAmosWengler.com>
BrooklynPaper.com

back on track. "I've lived in the area for eight years, and I do want to see this go through," said Noah Campbell. "For my kids and their kids, to have something wonderful like this in the community would be great."

Amos Wengler, the unofficial poet laureate of Coney Island, used his allotted three minutes to sing a song called, "Save Coney Island" (see vox pop).

The two-and-a-half hour meeting began with a more detailed explana-tion of the city's vision, which was first unveiled to the Brooklyn Cham-ber of Commerce in November.

"This is not your suburban Dis-ney park, and we want to keep it that way," promised Purnima Ka-

pur, the Department of City Plan-nig's Brooklyn director.

The centerpiece of the plan calls for turning the faded amusement district between West Eighth Street and Stillwell Avenue — most of which is owned by private develop-er Joe Sitt — into a 15-acre public park, surrounded by hotels, retail and more amusements.

The city would have to buy out Sitt — who spent more than \$100 million to acquire the land — in or-der to make that happen.

The plan also calls for rezoning the area bounded by West 20th Street and Mermaid, Surf and Still-well avenues to allow for 1,800 new apartments and 100,000 square feet of retail space.

A third area, bounded by the Boardwalk, West 19th and West 24th streets and Surf Avenue, much of which is currently mapped as parkland, would be de-mapped to stimulate the private construction of 2,700 apartments and 360,000 square feet of retail space.

Kapur and Lynn Kelly, the presi-dent of the Coney Island Develop-ment Corporation, offered even more details of how the city's plan would move forward.

• The city optimistically predict-ed that the state environmental re-view, the legislation required for the demapping of some parkland and the creation of new parks, and the uniform land use review process would be completed by early 2009.

• The city also said a request for proposals for an amusement opera-tor to run the new amusement park would be issued by 2009.

• All work will be done by 2012.

• The city estimates that the pro-ject will create about 20,000 tempo-rary construction jobs, and more than 3,000 permanent jobs.

• The city claims the plan will draw, over the next 10 years, more than \$2.5 billion in private invest-ment, and will generate about \$6.5 billion in tax revenue for the city over 30 years.

VOX POP

A parade of Brooklynites stepped up to the mic on Monday night to express their support, however qualified, for the city's grand vision for Coney Island. Here's what a few of the more than 200 raucous attendees had to say.



Lou Powsner, 84, Coney Island resident



Brian Gottlieb, attorney



Amos Wengler, poet laureate of Coney Island

City rejects historic housing plan

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

The city Landmarks Preservation Commission shot down a controversial plan to build a row of new, gated-off townhouses in the Cobble Hill Historic District.

The commission disapproved of almost all elements of the plan that called for converting the historic Lattin Institute at the corner of Amity and Henry streets into eight single-family townhouses in a controversial "mews-style" gated compound that would not only obstruct neighbors' views, but would also be inconsis-tent with existing architecture in the historic district.

"The gates were not a feature seen in the district or anywhere in the city of New York for that matter," said Lisa De Bourbon, a Landmarks spokeswoman, and "the mews concept was out of context with the district."

The developers designed their project as a modern mews — in this case, a private lane and courtyard — accessible from Henry Street. Five of the townhouses would have formed a row



Plans for the historic building at 110 Amity St. in Cobble Hill, which call for a mews-type housing project, have been rejected by the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

with their entrances on a private, gated lane.

Historically, a mews was a small side street for stables.

Now it's back to the drawing board for Lucky Boy Development and Time Equities, the developers of the project.

Opponents, including the Cobble Hill As-sociation and Community Board 6, were ec-static that the city snuffed the plans.

"The project was an interesting idea, but it doesn't fit with the neighborhood," said Mur-ray Adams, president of the Cobble Hill As-sociation. "They encroached much too much on the backyards" of their would-be neighbors.

Like the ranked residents, the Landmarks Preservation Commission also criticized the layout, because five of the townhouses would not directly face any public street.

The extent of the city's criticism surprised the developer. "They certainly had more comment about the site plan than I was anticipating," said Jonathan Wickett, principal at Lucky Boy. "I was expecting comments about the facade details — that's fair game."

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The Brooklyn Paper's essential guide to the Borough of Kings

January 12, 2008

Cuckoo for cocoa

GO treks across the borough for the best mugs of hot chocolate

By Lucy Baker
for The Brooklyn Paper

Dec. 21 marked the first official day of winter, the season of snowball fights, roaring fires and woolly sweaters. Of course, it's also time for rumy noses, bone-rattling winds and dusk right after lunch. Thankfully, there's one beverage that both celebrates and soothes the feelings that this time of year provokes: hot chocolate.

The term "hot chocolate" is often used interchangeably with "hot cocoa," although technically, the two are different. The former is made with actual chocolate, which contains cocoa butter, while the latter is made with cocoa powder and has had all the fats pressed out of it.

The Mayans were the first civilization to mix cocoa into a palatable potion of water, wine and chilies. (Here, we'll visit Park Slope's Chiles & Chocolate for an Oaxacan interpretation.) Centuries later, Europeans adapted their own versions using chocolate and cream or milk, and sometimes flavored liqueurs. (We'll give you the scoop on a blend of cocoa spiked with Grand Marnier that's served up at Le Gamin in Prospect Heights.) Today, in true, over-the-top, American fashion, we top ours with whipped cream and marshmallows. (See the Chocolate Room in Park Slope for housemade 'mallows.)

We all know about the famously rich versions at shops like Jacques Torres in DUMBO, but the cold weather had me looking for less well-known — but equally decadent — concoctions from Greenpoint to Carroll Gardens.

Brooklyn Bean & Tea Company

Recently, this funky, tiny, new coffee shop in Boerum Hill has added drinking chocolates to their extensive menu of coffees and teas. I stepped by early one morning and, on a whim, ordered a "Mexican Hot Chocolate" (\$3.50). While it may have lacked the caffeine kick of my usual cup of joe, I barely noticed. The silky, dark chocolate was expertly blended with the milk. Even though I



Variations on a theme: (Clockwise from top) At Le Gamin in Prospect Heights, Valrhona cocoa is blended with Grand Marnier. Greenpoint's Brooklyn Bean garnishes its hot chocolate with grated orange peel; and at Chiles & Chocolate in Park Slope, Lourdes Leon prepares a spicy, Oaxacan version.

ordered mine with — gasp! — skim milk, I still felt like I was sipping something sinful. The seasonings — cinnamon, ginger and cardamom — were light yet distinctive, especially on the nose and in the finish. Each sip began with their heady fragrance, gave way to full chocolate flavor, and ended with an extra-warming note of spice. Whipped cream was offered, but I declined; this hot chocolate was absolutely perfect unadorned.

Brooklyn Bean

This popular Greenpoint joint has an extensive hot chocolate menu. While all the versions sounded enticing, I opted for our borough's namesake — the "Brooklyn Cocoa" (\$4.25). It's a blend of Venezuelan chocolate and whole milk, topped with whipped cream and grated orange peel and dusted with cocoa powder. After my first taste, I determined that the point of this hot chocolate is not the drink but

DINING

Brooklyn Bean & Tea Company (355 Atlantic Ave. at Hoyt Street in Boerum Hill) accepts American Express, MasterCard and Visa. The shop is open Monday through Friday, from 7 am to 7 pm, and weekends, from 8 am to 7 pm. For information, call (718) 855-3580 or visit www.brooklynbean.com.

Brooklyn Label (180 Franklin St. at Java Street in Greenpoint) accepts American Express, MasterCard and Visa. The restaurant is open Monday through Friday, from 7 am to 11 pm, Saturdays, from 8 am to 11 pm, and Sundays, from 8 am to 4 pm. For information, call (718) 399-2008 or visit www.brooklynlabel.com.

Chiles & Chocolate (57 Seventh Ave. at Lincoln Place in Park Slope) accepts MasterCard and Visa. The restaurant is open Monday through Thursday, from 11 am to 10 pm, Fridays and Saturdays, from 10 am to 11 pm, and Sundays, from 10 am to 10 pm. For information, call (718) 520-7700.

The Chocolate Room (86 Fifth Ave. at Warren Street in Park Slope) accepts MasterCard and Visa. The shop is open Tuesday through Thursday, from noon to 11 pm, Fridays and Saturdays, from noon to midnight, and Sundays, from noon to 11 pm. Closed Mondays. For information, call (718) 753-2000 or visit www.thechocolateroombrooklyn.com.

O'Leary's (309 Court St. at Degraw Street in Carroll Gardens) accepts American Express, Discover, MasterCard and Visa. The shop is open Monday through Friday, from 7:30 am to 2 pm, and Saturdays from 7:30 am to 6 pm. Closed Sundays. For information, call (718) 875-5402 or visit www.demicofoods.com.

Le Gamin (156 Vanderbilt Ave. at Dean Street in Prospect Heights) accepts American Express, MasterCard and Visa. The shop is open daily, from 8 am to 10 pm. For information, call (718) 789-5171 or visit www.legamin.com.

the garnishes. The whipped cream took up over half my mug, which would have been a disappointment if it weren't so fresh and delicious, very airy and only mildly sweet. Likewise, the orange added a bold note of citrus that contrasted beautifully with the buttery cream.

The hot chocolate, hidden away at the very bottom, was like a tepid afterthought. Overall, the "Brooklyn Cocoa" is a satisfyingly sweet beverage, but it's not one that will warm you up on a freezing day in January.

Chiles & Chocolate

There are two kinds of hot chocolate on the menu at this tiny, hole-in-the-wall Oaxacan restaurant in Park Slope: the first, the "Chocolate Mayordomo" (\$5), is a blend of chocolate and milk flavored with cinnamon and almonds. It was sweet, nutty and warm, and the high-quality cinnamon imparted a complex finishing note, like a hint of a Red Hot candy at the back of my throat.

The second, the "Chiles Y Chocolate" (\$4), mixes chocolate and milk with "the essence of chile." Before being filled, the inside of my mug was smeared with a spicy paste, and while it was a little uneven (one side of the mug was more heavily coated

See COCOA on page 8

BOOKS

Boro as muse

Ever wondered what it is about Brooklyn that spawns so many talented authors or critics scribbles to come from far and wide to set up their homes here?

Sheephead Bay native Bill Goldstein, a New York Times books editor, promises to get to the bottom of that question with his star-studded panel discussion.

"Literary Brooklyn," to be held on Saturday in Manhattan.

The literati who will be mulling over the attraction the borough holds for them include

Paul Auster ("The Brooklyn Follies," "The New York Trilogy"), Rick Moody ("Demology," "The Ice Storm")

and Nicole Krauss (pictured), author of "The History of Love."

"I'll be asking them if there is something unique about Brooklyn that these writers are particularly inspired by — as a place that they live or as a place of the imagination," Goldstein told GO Brooklyn.

"How does it work for them?"

"When I'm in Brooklyn, and I'm there frequently to visit my mother, I'm struck time and time again by how beautiful and how filled with varieties of people Brooklyn is," mused Goldstein. "I think it affects the literary imagination just as it affects filmmakers."

Goldstein believes that Brooklyn has "an amazing bank of perspective" that isn't prevalent on the other side of the East River.

"What's exciting to me is that you have Paul Auster, who is adamantly situated himself in Brooklyn," said Goldstein. "He walks through Brooklyn streets to get to his office — at least he used to. You get a different feel of life in Brooklyn."

"So many people talk about Brooklyn as a place attendant on Manhattan, like it's a suburb of Manhattan. What I hope to do in the panel is to look at Brooklyn as its own place, not a satellite."

"Literary Brooklyn," a panel discussion with authors Paul Auster, Nicole Krauss and Bill Moody, moderated by Bill Goldstein, will take place on Jan. 12 at noon at the Times Center (The New York Times Building, 41st Street between Seventh and Eighth avenues in Manhattan). Tickets are \$25. For more information, visit www.artsandscienceweek.com. — Lisa J. Curtis

DANCE

Russian feet

"Being a dancer is a full time job that's not easy," Elena Sherbakova, director of the Moiseyev Dance Company, told GO Brooklyn in an e-mail this week. "Every artist, if he is dedicated to his craft, should aim for perfection."

And with her group's Saturday, Jan. 12 stop in Midwood for the Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts' "World of Dance" series, Sherbakova plans to do just that. The troupe's 85 dancers and 32 musicians will perform Russian dances (including the traditional "Summer" and "Polyanka" pieces, as well as a suite of Greek dances) that will showcase what has made the Moiseyev Dance Company one of the world's most respected for over 70 years.

Named for its founder, Igor Moiseyev, a renowned choreographer who passed away in November at the age of 101, the group is known for the preservation of traditional folk dances. And while that sounds quaint, Sherbakova, through her translator, said each work can take a month to perfect — which is especially important for the group's stop in Brooklyn, where it returns on almost every tour.

"The audience should be familiar with what they are about to see," said Sherbakova. And if they're familiar with perfection, it sounds like they're in for a treat.

Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts presents The Moiseyev Dance Company at 8 pm on Jan. 12 at Brooklyn College's Walt Whitman Theatre (2900 Campus Rd. at Hill Place in Midwood). Tickets are \$30-\$45. For information, call (718) 951-4500 or visit www.brooklyncenteronline.com. — Adam Rathe

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No buffalos were harmed

Beware of splinters — these "wings" are served on sticks!

In an event that can only be called revolutionary, once timid, tree-hugging, animal-loving vegans are being invited to take off their gloves (organic cotton, of course) and get up to their elbows in spicy wings just like those thug-like omnivores.

Foodwings, a vegan fast-food joint in Williamsburg, will be starting a fun, cruelty-free tradition when they hold the first ever "Vegan Buffalo Wing Eating Contest" on Wednesday, Jan. 16.

Contestants, herbivore and omnivore alike, have registered to battle for prizes including cash, T-shirts, tattoo gift cards and of course, ultimate bragging rights in the soy flesh eating community. Bikers, hipsters, musicians and artists are just some of the people stretching their stomachs for the big day.

The rules are simple: 10 pre-registered contestants will have 15 minutes to devour as many fiery hot veggie wings as they can. Anyone who vomits is disqualified.

Contestants have to eat the wings to the "bone" (or more literally, to the wooden stick), with only water available to put out the hot sauce-induced flames. (The showdown is sponsored by Frank's Red Hot Sauce.)



Buffalo wings are the most popular item on the menu at Foodwings. Consisted of texturized soy (i.e. the fruit of the soybean with a texture approximating chicken) imported from China, they were created by

Soy much fun: Marisa Butin enjoys the "Buffalo wings" at Williamsburg's Foodwings, a vegan fast-food restaurant. Owner-chef Freedom Tripodi has found 10 hardy souls who will eat as many of his soy creations as they can in 15 long minutes on Jan. 16.

His wings are considerably bigger than traditional Buffalo wings: Tripodi, hardly a small man at 5-feet, 10-inches tall and weighing in at 188 pounds, told GO Brooklyn that he has never eaten more than five of them in one sitting. He plans on starting the contestants — none of whom are pro eaters — out with 10 each, and said he'd be "really impressed" if anyone topped 20.

Registration for the event was closed a half an hour after it opened — even with a \$20 entry fee — but the public is invited to view the display of masticating prowess. Viewers in the first few rows should consider wearing their ponchos.

The "Vegan Buffalo Wing Eating Contest" kicks off at 6 pm on Jan. 16 at Foodwings (295 Grand St., between Redding and Havemeyer streets, in Williamsburg). For more information, call (718) 388-1919 or visit www.foodwings.net.

— Chris Varnus

BREAKING CHEWS

Snice, a veggie-friendly sandwich shop and coffee bar with one location in Manhattan's West Village, is finally wising up and opening a Park Slope location. The shop will open on Fifth Avenue near Third Street in just a few weeks, and GO Brooklyn will be first in line for a smoothie and a seitan Philly cheese steak.

If you made a New Year's resolution to drink less at home, check out **Rustik Tavern** (471 DeKalb Ave. at Franklin Avenue in Bedford-Stuyvesant), a new bar that opened on New Year's Eve and offers a full menu for dinner and brunch in addition to all the ingredients for a proper light lunch.

Also new is **Square Root Cafe** (584 Myrtle Ave. at Clason Avenue in Clinton Hill), a first time effort from neighborhood residents Eda Sanchez-Persampier and her husband Joe. The spot serves breakfast all day and has vegetarian-friendly lunch and dinner menus including macaroni and cheese, stuffed portobello mushrooms and soy burgers and mash.

It's a banner day Down Under the Manhattan



Slice of life: Soon-to-open Ignazio's in DUMBO is around the corner from famous pizza parlor Grimaldi's.

Old Fulton Street in DUMBO) is close to opening — and just blocks from the venerable Grimaldi's. It will be a feat to match the quality of Grimaldi's famous pies, but if the newcomer offers delivery and accepts credit cards, it could surely go a long way.

There's plenty going into the oven in Park Slope as well. **Peppino's**, the Bay Ridge mainstay, has opened a second pizza parlor at 469 Fifth Ave., near 11th Street in Park Slope. And if you're looking for something besides a soda to sip with your slice, try **Juice Box** (1289 Prospect Ave. at Greenwood Avenue in Windsor Terrace), a new wine shop that opened in December and is already a hit with thirsty types.

On to fishier matters: Park Slope's **Inaka Sushi** has closed and dialing the phone number now leads callers to **Mura** (369 Fifth Ave. at Sixth Street in Park Slope) where a staffer wouldn't explain what happened to Inaka, but did offer to replicate any item from its menu for me.

While playing with your food is ordinarily frowned upon, there's one school in Midwood that's encouraging you to go kitchen on your veggie. On Jan. 13, Virginia-based Chef James Parker (www.veggart.com) will host a class on making floral bouquets out of everyday fruits and vegetables at the new **Center for Kosher Culinary Arts** (1047 Coney Island Ave. at East 11th Street in Midwood, (718) 692-2442). The pricey class (\$175) includes a 10-piece gardening tool set.

Got a hot dining tip? Drop us a line at GO.Brooklyn@BrooklynPaper.com.

— Adam Rathe and Lisa J. Curtis

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COCOA...

Continued from page 7

than the other), the overall flavor was addictively smoky and peppery and provided a double dose of warmth: first from the heat of the milk and then from the fiery chocolate.

The Chocolate Room

When Brooklynites are in the mood for cocoa, the Chocolate Room in Park Slope is a no-brainer. The "Classic Hot Cocoa" (\$4.50) is a delightful mix of tradition, as both chocolate and cocoa powder are blended with steamed whole milk and a hint of vanilla. An additional 50 cents will buy you a homemade marshmallow.

If you're looking for a super sweet treat, this is the way to go. There is absolutely no hint of bitterness — just pure, milk chocolatey flavor. The beverage is surprisingly light, about the consistency of a cappuccino, and has a similar (if slightly less prominent) layer of bubbly foam at the top. The temperature was just right.

D'Amico's

In the very back of D'Amico's, Carroll Gardens' oldest and most revered coffee institution, past the barrels of workers scooping and grinding beans from giant wooden burlis is a small, whirling machine. It is inconspicuous — easy to miss next to the larger, shinier coffee makers — but it dispenses some of the richest, most velvety hot chocolates I've ever tasted (\$1). The portion is very small — only four ounces — but trust me: it's all you need. More dessert than drink, D'Amico's hot chocolate is like molten, melted ice cream. While it is seriously sweet, the sugar takes a backseat to the intense, dark chocolate flavor. If you're craving the kind of hot chocolate that will coat your throat, look no further.

Le Gamin

This rustic French bistro in Prospect Heights serves up a lethal concoction of Valrhona cocoa, steamed milk and Grand Marnier called the "Chocolat Gamin" (\$6) in a bowl the size of the one I use for my breakfast cereal. The flavor was floral and slightly bitter (if you have a sweet tooth, you might need to add a packet of sugar) but not bracing, like really good, unswartened chocolate. Unfortunately, when I was first served, my bowl wasn't so much hot as it was lukewarm. However, my waiter graciously and carefully reheated it, and the result was the perfect anecdote to the icy, blustery afternoon outside.

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John Corigliano's Mr. Tambourine Man
featuring Amy Burton and members
of the Brooklyn Philharmonic
Saturday, Feb 9, 4 PM

Literary

Russian Literary Series:
Alexander Genis
Sunday, Jan 20, 1:30 PM

Author Talk:
District Attorney Charles Hynes
Sunday, Jan 27, 1:30 PM

Brooklyn Independents:
What's So Funny about Brooklyn?
featuring Amy Sedaris, Gary Shteyngart,
Ed Park and Anthony Winkler
Thursday, Feb 7, 7 PM

Author Talk:
Ishmael Beah & Laura Simms
Saturday, Feb 16, 4 PM

Film

Screening of
The Color Purple
Friday, Jan 25, 6 PM

Screening of
AfroPop: Welcome to Nollywood
Saturday, Jan 26, 4 PM

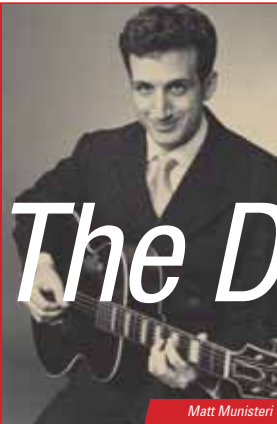
Silent Film Series:
Slapstick's Golden Age
Saturday, Feb 23, 1 PM

Screening of
AfroPop: 10 Days in Africa
Saturday, Feb 23, 4 PM

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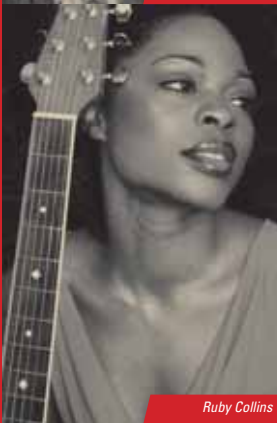
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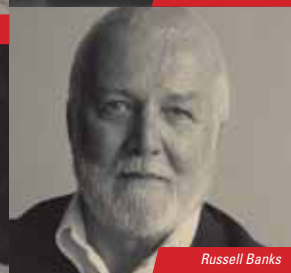
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Elias Khoury



Casandra's Dream

Woody Allen returns to London for dull suspense flick

By Adam Rafter
The Brooklyn Paper

Grow all you want about the Noah Baumbach and Darren Aronofsky making movies to-day, but as far as Brooklyn filmmakers are concerned, there are generally only two words in a conversation: Woody Allen.

With the release of "Casandra's Dream," his 42nd film, though, the Midwestern native continues down the course he set with "Match Point" in 2005. Gone are the quirky, off-kilter New York films that made him famous (and even made moviegoers cringe, such as "Melinda and Melinda" from 2004), and in their place have grown moody, gray films that play out across London like episodes of "Lan & Ode" with a more attractive cast.

"Casandra's Dream" follows two brothers, played by Ewan McGregor ("Star Wars: Episode III," "Moulin Rouge") and Colin Farrell ("Miami Vice," "Alexander"), whose big-money dreams are constantly being burst. Terry, played with surprising depth by Farrell, is a compulsively gambling mechanic who gazes more whiskey than the cars he works on do at work, while Ian (McGregor) plans to become a hotelier, but can't handle managing the failing restaurant that their father runs.

After both brothers find themselves on the backside of a lucky streak — Ian's met a foxxy actress, played by newcomer Hayley Atwell (indeed, a foxxy actress, but can't make good on his lavish promises and Terry's found himself \$90,000 in the hole after a game of high-stakes

poker. But their very rich uncle Howard, played by veteran Tom Wilkinson ("The Exorcism of Emily Rose"), who seems to be the sole point of contention between their quibbling parents, comes to town and, wouldn't you know it, has a proposition for the boys.

Of the film, Allen has said, "It's a tragic story with suspense," and he's right about the first part.

During Uncle Howard's visit — scheduled between the opening of a plastic surgery office in China and a vacation in Thailand — the brothers

hit him up for a loan, but instead of pulling out his checkbook, Howard counters with a plea for them to help him clean up some unpleasantness with a former employee who has grown chummy with investigators looking into Howard's business.

The movie can't be bought, and Allen sets the scene so that the only way to deal with him can be bullets over Buckingham Palace.

With the grease beneath his fingernails and his endless pill popping, the audience might guess that Terry would be the brother willing to slay for pay, but as the brothers plot, bungle and then carry out the murder, it's the other brother, Ian, who takes the lead. Daniel Craig meets a terrible fate, let it be said that McGregor might make a very smart Mr. Bond.

So, while there was the expected back-and-forth between the brothers leading up to the homicide, the real problems don't begin until afterward.

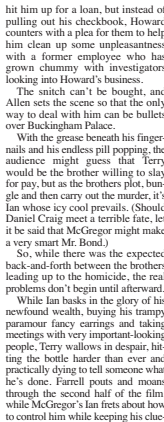
While Ian basks in the glory of his newfound wealth, buying his trampy paramour fancy earrings and taking meetings with very important people, Terry wallows in despair, hating the bottle harder than ever and practically dying to tell someone what he's done. Farrell pouts and moans through the second half of the film, while McGregor's Ian frets about how to control him while keeping his clueless, girlfriend Kate (Sally Hawkins) from taking him to a shrink.

Things quickly unravel from here as Terry begins to contemplate suicide or, worse, turning himself in.

Allen's picture doesn't fall completely flat — although it has gone straight to DVD in Germany. The score, by Philip Glass, and the cinematography are lovely, and the acting, for the most part, is well done. What I found lacking was a plot to get hooked on. There's very little in the way of narrative turns that leap from the audience's first guess at the worst of all, there's really nobody to root for.

Ian is slick and likeable, but his cold, premeditated murder of his mother's friend is a real turn-off.

While it's a crime to see that Allen has turned a corner in his storytelling, "Casandra's Dream" wasn't the same as mine when I walked into the theater.



Hot salsa

According to Jose Conde, a Park Slope resident and veteran of the Latin music scene, his music will "make you dance and move your hips whether you're a devoted salsa dancer or a wallflower."

On Saturday, Jan. 12, Conde and his band, *Os Tres* — which means "fresh wave" in Spanish — will join other Latin- and African-tinged bands, including Bushwick-dwellers The Budos Band, for the first ever "Mondo Music Festival," a concert celebrating international music.

"This is a real special occasion," Conde told GO Brooklyn. "You're going to have some of the finest, most forward-looking bands in New York — who all happen to be based in Brooklyn — playing together and pushing the envelope in Latin funk and Afrobeat music."

When he isn't playing shows, Conde said he counts on seeing them at a handful of the borough's hotspots to keep him in the international music loop.

"The Mondo Music Festival" will take place at 7 p.m. on Jan. 12 at Hro Ballroom 363 W. 16th St. at Ninth Avenue in Manhattan. Tickets are \$15-\$18. For information, call (212) 242-4300 or visit www.hrobroom.com. —Adam Rafter

BROOKLYN Nightlife

Compiled by Chiara F. Curran

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- Van Pops Brooklyn Act Manifesto, 7 p.m., \$TBD. Jan. 18: "Shooting War" Anthony Lopez (author), Tim Pheasant (DJ), 8 p.m., \$TBD.
- FORT GREENE**
BAM Cafe
30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place in Fort Greene, (718) 634-4100. www.bam.net
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- GOWANUS**
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222 Third St. at Third Avenue in Gowanus, (718) 330-0312. www.issueprojectroom.org
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- GREENWICH**
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19 Avenue A at Manhattan Avenue in Greenwich, (718) 389-1883. www.clubeuropab.com
Saturdays: VIP dance party, 10 p.m., FREE before 10:30 p.m., \$15 after 10:30 p.m., 55. Tuesdays: Karaoke night, 9 p.m., FREE. Fridays: Progressive dance party, 10 p.m., FREE before 10:30 p.m., \$15 after 10:30 p.m., 55. Saturdays: Live band Karaoke, 10 p.m., 55. Sundays: Live band Karaoke, 10 p.m., 55. Mondays: Live band Karaoke, 10 p.m., 55. Tuesdays: Live band Karaoke, 10 p.m., 55. Wednesdays: Live band Karaoke, 10 p.m., 55. Thursdays: Live band Karaoke, 10 p.m., 55. Fridays: Live band Karaoke, 10 p.m., 55. Saturdays: Live band Karaoke, 10 p.m., 55. Sundays: Live band Karaoke, 10 p.m., 55. Mondays: Live band Karaoke, 10 p.m., 55. Tuesdays: Live band Karaoke, 10 p.m., 55. Wednesdays: Live band Karaoke, 10 p.m., 55. Thursdays: Live band Karaoke, 10 p.m., 55. Fridays: Live band Karaoke, 10 p.m., 55. Saturdays: Live band Karaoke, 10 p.m., 55. Sundays: Live band Karaoke, 10 p.m., 55. Mondays: Live band Karaoke, 10 p.m., 55. Tuesdays: Live band Karaoke, 10 p.m., 55. 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New brew

In the eastern stretch of Williamsburg, the Pour House was known as a reliable — if seedy — spot to grab a drink. Now that the Pour House has been transformed into Le-Gion Bar by the team behind Williamsburg's popular K&M bar, what was "Pour" is a whole lot richer.

Perhaps it's the impressive selection of draft beer — featuring hard-to-find Chimay on tap — and single-malt Scotch that's bringing in the crowds.

And although Legion has a bit more polish than its predecessor, it hasn't forgotten its roots. Each evening, happy hour runs from 4 p.m. until 9 p.m., with a dollar off all well drinks, and draft beers and pool games are always only \$1.

Locals who might otherwise be turned off by a fancy lounge, which opened under its new ownership in September, have deftly taken notice.

It's become part of my routine for after-work beers. "Greenpoint resident Lou Caldarola told GO Brooklyn: 'They've really changed and improved the place; the back room is great for a group gathering, the music is good and the bartenders are friendly and down-to-earth.'"



The exposed brick walls and faux fireplace create a warm and cozy feel that inspires late night revelers to dance, and the back room presents the option for a bit of privacy should you need it; regular Perry Lee described the spot as "low-key and neighborhood." And in a corner of the neighborhood where people go to escape

the clamor of busy Bedford Avenue, that's all you can ask for.

Legion Bar (790 Metropolitan Ave. at Humboldt Street in Williamsburg) accepts American Express, MasterCard and Visa. The bar is open daily, from 4 p.m. to 4 a.m. For information, call (718) 387-3797.

— Sarah McCormick

9 DAYS...

Continued from page 2

(718) 786-2972. Free.

COLONIAL COOKING: Urban Park Rangers offers a demo to find out what it took to keep a colonial life. Samples provided. Noon. Meet at the Fort Greene Visitor Center on the hill near the Myrtle Avenue and Washington Park entrance. Call (718) 367-7776. Free.

ADOPTION TALK: Spence-Chapin Adoption Agency offers information to prospective parents about the adoption process. Meeting is open to couples and singles interested in adopting children from Eastern Europe, Asia, Latin America or Ethiopia. 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Brooklyn Public Library. Advance registration required. (212) 569-0300. Free.

HARVEST PAINTING: Brooklyn Botanic Garden offers a class on painting techniques. Class is held outdoors. 2:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. 1000 Washington Ave. Call for fee and info to pre-register. (718) 624-7220.

PARENTING CLASS: The Brooklyn Art Exchange hosts a talk: Parenting 2008. Discussion focuses on topics pertinent to parents today in an interactive, intimate conversation. Suggested donation, \$5. 6 p.m. 421 Fifth Ave. (718) 832-0018. www.bae.org.

STORYTELLING: Maggid Yeshiva Buxbaum and other storytellers offer an evening of holy tales, live music and telethon. 5:10, 5:55 students. 7 p.m. Congregation B'nai Avraham, 117 Remsen St. (718) 624-2422.

CAFE STENOGRAPH: presents the film "North by Northwest" (1959). 10:30 p.m. 422 Seventh Ave. (718) 367-7776. Free.

MON, JAN 14

SENIOR EXERCISE PROGRAM: Seniors in Shape presents its Winter 2008 Program. Classes include tap dance, aerobics, pain management and more. \$5 day pass. 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Aviator Sports and Recreation, Hanger 5, Floyd Bennett Field. (718) 758-7500.

MEMORY SCREENING: The Memory Center of NY Methodist Hospital offers a screening for early diagnosis of Alzheimer's or dementia. 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. Park Slope Geriatric Day Center, 1 Prospect Park West. Call for an appointment. (347) 296-2345. Free.

CONCERT: Edward R. Murrow Music Institute presents a Chamber Music concert. \$8, \$6 in advance. 7 p.m. Edward R. Murrow High School, 1600 Ave. L. (718) 256-9283 ext. 119.

LECTURE: Park Slope Greens presents a talk, "A Report on the Global Climate Change Conference in Bali." Sponsored by the Global Labor Institute of Cornell University is guest speaker. 7 p.m. Park Slope Methodist Church, 410 South Ave. (718) 788-2260. Free.

ESL REGISTRATION: The Flatbush YMCA offers English as a Second Language classes. 1601 Flatbush Ave. (212) 875-4345. Free.

TUES, JAN 15

BLOOD DRIVE: Hosted by the Red Cross. 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Kingsborough Community College, 2001 Oriental Blvd. (908) 933-BLOOD.

SEMINAR: CANIA presents "How to Sell More: Marketing Basics." Learn how to research an industry, identify a target market and develop effective marketing solutions to reach the potential customer. 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. 884 Flatbush Ave. (718) 262-2500. Free.

BOOKCOURT: presents a reading of essays from "Brooklyn Was Mine." More see story, this



MUSIC LEE: On Jan. 17, famed composer — and father of Spike — Bill Lee will be performing as part of Bargemusic's "Thursday Night Jazz" series. Lee has worked with luminaries such as Aretha Franklin and Bob Dylan, and has also composed original music for a number of his son's films, so we wouldn't be surprised to see a few famous guests in the audience.

page. 7 p.m. 163 Court St. (718) 553-6244. Free.

MEDITATION CLASS: Weekly class discusses the daily practice of meditation. 5:10, 7:30 p.m. to 8:45 p.m. Unity Church, 1901 Lefferts Rd. (718) 496-5514.

ARTIST LECTURE: Filmmaker and photographer Anna Gaskell to speak as part of Pratt Museum Artists Lecture Series. Free. 12:45 p.m. Engineering Building, Room 371 of Pratt Campus. (718) 367-7776. Free.

THURS, JAN 17

SENIOR EXERCISE PROGRAM: Seniors in Shape presents its Winter 2008 Program. Classes include chi-gong, rock, dance and more. \$5 day pass. 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Aviator Sports and Recreation, Hanger 5, Floyd Bennett Field. (718) 758-7500.

LECTURE: Heights and Hill Community Council presents Trax S.D., performer and ukelele virtuoso. 2 p.m. 160 Montague St. third floor. Call to register. (718) 596-8709. Free.

EXHIBIT: BAC Gallery hosts a group exhibit: "The Lack of Desire." 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. 111 Front St., suite 218. (718) 625-0080. Free.

EAT, DRINK AND BE LITERARY: Brooklyn Academy of Music offers a sold-out salon where writers, readers and eaters meet. Tonight: MacArthur Fellow George Saunders. \$48 includes buffet dinner, wines, live music and talk. 7:30 p.m. Lafayette Ave. Reservation and pre-payment necessary. (718) 624-1000.

BARGEMUSIC: Classical music program features works by Brahms, Shostakovich and Tchaikovsky. \$35, \$30 seniors, \$20 students. 8 p.m. Fulton Ferry Landing, Old Fulton Street at the East River. (718) 624-2083.

CONCERT: Edward R. Murrow Music Institute presents a Vocal concert. \$8, \$6 in advance. 7 p.m. Edward R. Murrow High School, 1600 Ave. L. (718) 256-9283 ext. 119.

FRI, JAN 18

OPERA: American Opera Projects presents Program A: "Seance on a Wet Afternoon," with soprano Lauren Flanagan. \$20, \$15 students and seniors. South Oxford Square, 138 S. Oxford St. (718) 398-4024. www.operaprojects.org.

BARGEMUSIC: Classical music program features works by Beethoven, \$35, \$30 seniors, \$20 students. 8 p.m. Fulton Ferry Landing, Old Fulton Street at the East River. (718) 624-2083.

CONCERT: Edward R. Murrow Music Institute presents a Vocal concert. \$8, \$6 in advance. 7 p.m. Edward R. Murrow High School, 1600 Ave. L. (718) 256-9283 ext. 119.

SAT, JAN 19

OUTDOORS AND TOURS

ICE SKATING: at Prospect Park's Wollman Rink. \$5, \$3 kids and seniors. \$6 skate rental. See

Writing on the wall

New anthology rounds up love letters to Brooklyn

By Adam Rathe
The Brooklyn Paper

Subway readers, prepare for a new accessory. Last week, "Brooklyn Was Mine," a collection of essays by local literati — including Jonathan Lethem, Phillip Lopate, Emily Barton and Jennifer Egan — was released and, from what we can tell, it will soon replace paperback copies of "Everything is Illuminated" and rumpled Dawn Powell novels as prime F train literature.

Conceived by Vogue magazine editors Chris Knutsen and Valerie Steiker — he lives in Fort Greene, she lives in Brooklyn Heights — the book is comprised of non-fiction works that range from the very personal (Alexandra Styron's "A Sentimental Education" delves into her relationship with her father, William, famed author of "Sophie's Choice") to more historical

Egan's "Reading Lucy" follows the life of a Navy Yard worker over five months in 1944.

The book's introduction, penned by Lopate, makes a strong argument for the book's existence on merit alone when it points out, "[Brooklyn's] literary soul is sound and robust, and its writers fiercely loyal."

However, it isn't just to crown about the strength of our writers that the book exists, although that would be enough: all of the proceeds from the book's sales will be donated to Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn, the community action group dedicated to opposing the Atlantic Yards project.

"From the very beginning, the idea was, 'That's what we're going to do,'" said Steiker. "And it was remarkable that 20 writers immediately passionately jumped on board and were excited to write pieces, but also to work for the public cause." All of the essays in the book were donated by the writers, who usually command very large paychecks.

The development, which is slated to include an arena for the Nets basketball team and a slew of high rises, has acquired its place through eminent domain, inciting the wrath of community activists.

"[The Atlantic Yard project] is a big mistake. It's not just a sports [arena] and some housing — it's this incredibly



BOOKS

Emily Barton, Darcy Steinker and Alexandra Styron will read from "Brooklyn Was Mine" (Riverhead Books, \$15), edited by Chris Knutsen and Valerie Steiker at 7 p.m. on Jan. 15 at BookCourt (163 Court St. at Pacific Street in Cobble Hill). For information, call (718) 875-3677 or visit www.bookcourt.org.

dense development of towers," Lethem ("The Fortress of Solitude") told GO Brooklyn in a 2007 interview. "To oppose that is not to be against development, but to say that this is really badly put together and to question why it's been forced down the gullet of the borough instead of being built from the neighborhood's interests up."

It's not surprising that the "Brooklyn Was Mine" contributors were interested in preserving the endangered area that abuts neighborhoods many of them call home.

"In the beginning," said Knutsen, "we noted that there were several writers already on the advisory board of Develop Don't Destroy Brooklyn. So it wasn't a huge associative leap to make."

Another safe bet is counting on brainy

Brooklynites to swarm around a book as if it were a benefit concert. The reading at BookCourt on Jan. 15 — featuring Darcy Steinker ("Easter Everywhere"), Alexandra Styron ("All the Finest Girls"), Barton ("Brooklyn") — will help draw attention to the tome and give fans a rare chance to see some of these celebrity authors read together.

And what's in "Brooklyn Was Mine" for people who, for some reason that we're not quite sure of, don't live in the borough?

"I think on one hand, Brooklyn is an American ideal. It has such a rich, deep history from Coney Island to the Dodgers to Walt Whitman — there's the sense that it's an American landscape," said Steiker. "I think there's some crazy statistic that one in four Americans can trace their roots back to Brooklyn and on the other hand, we hope the essays transcend the sense of place."

The book works so well because the essays do just that. Whether it's "Down the Manhole," Elizabeth Gaffney's story about the cutting-edge sewers of 19th century Brooklyn or "I Hate Brighton Beach," Lara Vapnyar's essay about the way Russian culture has washed up on American shores, the stories rock of the borough but are universally appealing. Readers are asked to suspend their disbelief and accept a locale that can boast everything from a world-class minor league baseball team to the Cyclone in Coney Island to the dimly lit pubs of Kensington; a place that only those who live here know truly exists.

The flap copy describes Brooklyn as "what Greenwich Village was for an earlier generation — a welspring of inspiration and artistic expression." And while the award-winning (and, most likely, brownstone-owning) contributors do represent the brigade of bookish types that have taken over certain parts of the borough, at times it can feel as though Brooklyn is *theirs*, since no one not already in the triumphant writers club is included. But a book of unknowns most likely wouldn't fly off the shelves in quite the same manner, and would earn less for the non-profit that the book is meant to bolster.

So, fly it should. All the celebrity names in the Atlantic Yards fervor aside, the collection is a strong showing from some of the brightest talent writing today. The sum of its collection does end up equalling more than its parts, unlike the borough itself.

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OUR OPINION

No to jailhouse school

I almost sounded like a joke: At a meeting last week, the city's Corrections Commissioner Martin Horn announced that he's had so much trouble finding commercial tenants for the ground-floor retail annex at the Brooklyn House of Detention that he's considering putting a middle school in the two-story space.

But it was no joke. And, according to several people who were at the meeting, Councilman David Yassky (D-Brooklyn Heights) supported Horn's laughable idea.

Putting a middle school at the jail site is as bad an idea that has bubbled up from the bureaucracy in years. Not only does it treat already struggling public school parents with contempt, but it sends a poor symbolic message to students — that the government treats education and incarceration as the same thing (merely the age of the inmates is different).

Yassky has been calling for a new middle school to serve Brooklyn Heights, Downtown and the growing neighborhood of DUMBO — but his support for a middle school in the jail is wrongheaded and, frankly, petulant.

Yassky, you see, staunchly opposes DUMBO developer David Walentas's plan to build an 18-story apartment building — which would include a middle school, free of charge to the city — along Dock Street. His opposition is based, he says, because part of the building would block some views of the Brooklyn Bridge — though he downplays the fact that most of the lost views would be from apartments whose owners were told when they purchased the units that they would lose the Brooklyn Bridge view (see Walentas's renderings at www.dockstreetdumbo.com).

There was some merit to Yassky's objections three years ago to an earlier version of Walentas's plan. That incarnation was bulkier and blocked far more views of the Brooklyn Bridge. As a result of public outcry and Yassky's opposition, the plan failed.

But now, Walentas has returned with a far better project.

By acquiring additional land, the 18-story wing of the building is set further back from the fabled bridge. Also, he has made a commitment to environmentally friendly construction and has set aside 20 percent of the retail units at below-market rates.

And he's including that middle school. If Yassky still wants to oppose the Dock Street project, that's his prerogative. But if he thinks a jail is a better place for a new middle school than in the better two floors of a David Walentas building in DUMBO, he needs to re-educate himself on the true needs of his constituents.

ALL DRAWN OUT



LETTERS

Our Brooklyn (Iowa) coverage earns accolades

To the editor,

Kudos on your most original issue of The Brooklyn Paper to date — your coverage of the Iowa caucus from Brooklyn, Iowa ("Brooklyn votes," Jan. 5).

I liked your coverage of "the other Brooklyn," though I was disappointed that you did not show us a picture of the "other Brooklyn Bridge." It's probably anti-climactic, but I'd love to see it.

Also, your feature about the 80 people and things to watch in '08 was great. Thank you for the mentioning BCAT, where Greg Sutton is doing a great job.

Then again, I don't think Marty Markowitz is going to be mayor — especially as Atlantic Yards continues to blow up.

Steve DeSivo, Brooklyn Heights
Editor's note: Obviously omitting a photo of the Brooklyn (Iowa) Bridge was a tremendous oversight. So here it is, at right.

To the editor,

I enjoyed meeting your reporter, Gersh Kurtzman, during his trip to our Brooklyn and wanted to pass on to him that everyone read his stories and watched the video clips, and we all loved his coverage of the Iowa caucus.

I even learned a few things about my little hometown thanks to his reports (though I was relieved I didn't end up in our town paper's group action).

My jaded California friends thought there was no way Barack Obama could pull off Iowa, but when he did, they were very inspired. They loved seeing how the caucus worked in Gersh's video.

Laura Calderwood, Brooklyn, Iowa

Good Purchase

To the editor,

In your recent article regarding the beginning of construction of Brooklyn Bridge Park ("Construction of 'park' begins" with demolition," Jan. 5), you incorrectly reported that the Park Building under the Brooklyn Bridge is not a landmark. The building is within the Fulton Ferry Historic District and therefore falls under the oversight of the Landmarks Preservation Commission.

The LPC's action to allow the building to be demolished without even a clear plan of what is going to be erected in its stead was a low point in the agency's 42-year history. There is no legitimate reason for the demolition of this distinguished public building and



The Brooklyn (Iowa) Bridge, over Big Bear Creek, is not a suspension bridge.

its proposed demolition casts a pall on protective oversight of the Landmarks Law.

Simon Bankoff, Windsor Terrace
The writer is executive director of the Historic District Council.

Rats! Column unfair

To the editor,

Rats get no love at all and if Juliana Bunim gets her way, it will get savagely worse. ("Brooklyn's rat killer fights on," Dec. 22). Bunim seems to want them shot or smashed.

Behind this hysteria, of course, is a dirty little truth: Rats proliferate because humans are so messy. Anyone who has ever seen a rat die of poison knows what a long, agonizing process it is. But even if you have these clean, curious rodents (who mate for life, by the way), consider how truly ineffective "rat abatement" programs are.

Our job is to keep Brooklyn Heights a lot cleaner than it is now.

Wayne Johnson, Brooklyn Heights

Bitter beef

To the editor,

Gersh Kurtzman was so right about Peter Luger ("Beef battle begins," Peter Luger

faces meaty competition," The Brooklyn Angle, Dec. 22). We took our daughter and her husband to Peter Luger for a treat last spring, and were totally disappointed.

The steak was not tasty and had so much gristle that there was no possibility of overeating — or any need for a doggie bag! And since nothing else on the menu at Peter Luger has ever been worth going to, it was a pathetic, expensive meal, enhanced by the usual surly service.

Never again, especially with so many great places to eat in Brooklyn. I read the Times, but it's your paper that I really love. Keep going!

Rona Schneider, Brooklyn Heights

Some expert

To the editor,

I Donald Weston's recent letter to the Editor ("Expert: There is a way to fix Atlantic Yards traffic," Dec. 22) accused the Council of Brooklyn Neighborhoods of a "lack of understanding" — a wrong accusation.

Before criticizing CBN's understanding of building design, it would behoove Mr. Weston to take a closer look at the Atlantic Yards site and plans. With the planned arena setbacks just 20 feet from both Atlantic

and Flatbush avenues, it would not be possible to relocate the "stadium" further from the street, unless the Nets intend to play half-court games or drastically reduce the number of planned seats.

And CBN, of course, understands that better blast-resistant materials exist today, but a glass-walled building still presents significant safety challenges. While we hate to dwell on the potential for terrorism, it does exist, and like structural engineers and their modern materials, terrorists and their weapons are getting more sophisticated, too.

We also understand that measures can be taken to keep vehicles from getting "too close" to the planned arena and other glass-walled buildings. But Mr. Weston conveniently disregards the fact that a NYPD spokesperson has said that the department doesn't foresee a need for bollards. In that case, unless someone plans on digging a moat, vehicles would not be kept from getting too close.

And based on last resistance hasn't kept Newark police from closing streets adjacent to that city's new Prudential Center arena.

In addition to his misunderstanding of CBN's concerns about security, Mr. Weston offers several "solutions" that are not solutions at all. His proposal to relocate surface parking lots to the less-affluent neighborhoods of Brownsville or East New York smacks of classism, and would make the fact that some neighborhoods have about being turned into vast park-and-ride areas by congestion pricing.

Mr. Weston's proposal to eliminate on-street parking on major thoroughfares around the site would have the unintended consequence of causing serious hardship to merchants, Atlantic Avenue business owners have been working feverishly to eliminate the elimination of metered parking currently in effect from 4-7 pm on weekdays, which has been a detriment to businesses there. Sacrificing established local businesses and entrepreneurs for the sake of Atlantic Yards is no solution. And creating more traffic capacity will only encourage more people to drive.

While Mr. Weston's intentions appear noble, his suggestions are a dollar short and a day late. Where were Mr. Weston and the Brooklyn Chapter of the American Institute of Architects when the Environmental Impact Statement for the Atlantic Yards project

was being developed?

CBN hired experts who analyzed the project's myriad environmental impacts, and we submitted extensive testimony on a wide range of the project's potential effects. We, and the larger community, would have valued input from the ALA in their areas of expertise.

Eric McClure, Park Slope
The writer is a member of the Council of Brooklyn Neighborhoods' Steering Committee.

Food no-op

To the editor,

I loved the Park Slope Food Co-op when I lived in Park Slope, but I'm not sure if that's what's best for Fort Greene and Clinton Hill now. ("A Food Co-op of their own," Dec. 22).

There is a small co-op already in existence and a vegetable/fruit service called the Clinton Hill CSA, which has been growing by leaps and bounds the last few years.

It seems it would make sense to work on something already, rather than to take the Slope model and transplant it to Clinton Hill.

Eulalia Brooks, Clinton Hill

Clarke hailed

To the editor,

I have not been terribly enamored of Rep. Yvette Clarke's first year in Washington, but kudos to her for having the political courage and common sense to vote against the "Christmas is nice" resolution ("Yvette votes 'No' on Christmas," Dec. 22).

At best, this was a bit of pointless legislative fluff that could have well been amended to include the statement that "puppies are cute" — factually true, but accomplishing nothing useful.

At worst, the resolution was a cheap attempt to score political points by showing "resolve" against the fictitious — but frequently hyped — "War on Christmas."

In either case, the result is the same: the ability of Christians to practice their faith has been neither strengthened nor weakened, and the Congress has now set the precedent that the hundreds of other religions practiced in America are equally deserving of a resolution of support, as are those who practice no religion at all.

Chris Bastian, Brooklyn Heights

To the editor,

The only thing more idiotic than Rep. Yvette Clarke's reason for voting against the Christmas resolution was Rep. Steve King's self-pitying rationale for introducing it. Nobody I know, Christian or not, is trying to deny the importance of Christmas. If anybody is trying to eradicate the meaning of the holiday, it is the mass merchants with their constant Christmas promotions, not the ACLU, as King claims.

PS: On a positive note, the Smartmum column was thoughtful and perceptive ("Hepcat can't wait for 30th reunion," Dec. 22). It's disturbing to think that a college could determine an alumnus's worth based on a questionnaire. I feel this is a result of many students' view of the university as an upscale trade school that one attends solely to be qualified for better employment.

Richard A. Presutti, Carroll Gardens

Wait gain

To the editor,

So, once again I was standing at the bus stop for half an hour, waiting for a bus that's supposed to arrive every 10 minutes and it dawned on me that if I had walked, I would've been home by now! That's when I realized that these lousy buses must be part of Marty Markowitz's anti-obesity campaign!

Nice one, Mr. Borough Prez!

Henry Hook, Park Slope

Editor's note: For the record, the Borough President has no control over the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which oversees the timing of buses.

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NEIGHBORHOOD REPORT

PARK SLOPE

Mooney's buys some time

By Dana Rubinstein
The Brooklyn Paper

In a last-ditch effort to save a Flatbush Avenue watering hole long enough to serve a few more rounds, a Prospect Heights bar-owner is adopting an unusual tactic, one involving, of all things, an article in The Brooklyn Paper.

Kevin Mooney, the owner of Mooney's Pub, a 30-year-old Irish bar between Park and Sterling places, had been paying rent month-to-month for 15 of those years when, in October, he was served a notice of eviction from his landlord, Lina Fang.

Then, following the correct legal procedure, she sued Mooney for eviction.

But Jeffrey Salatiel, Mooney's lawyer, said Fang erred when she then told The Brooklyn Paper that while Mooney's had to leave, she was not, in fact, evicting that pub.

"We are not evicting anyone," Fang was quoted in The Paper. "Mooney's is leaving because they can't afford the current rent."

Salatiel said that single comment is the basis for Mooney's case.

"I'm going to attack the eviction, saying that the notice is contradicted by the landlord's statements to the press," said Salatiel. "The notice has to be unequivocal. And this is clearly equivocal."

Salatiel acknowledged that this was not the most traditional of attacks, but, "in some situations, it's all you have."

And according to Bob Dubno, a real estate attorney in Park Slope, what they have ain't all that bad.

"The lawyer is being clever and is probably going to win on that," said Dubno.

According to Dubno, once a landlord serves a tenant with a 30-day notice, if the landlord does anything to contradict that legal document, like, say, collecting rent, or publicly contradicting herself to the press, then that 30-day notice is nullified.

But that doesn't mean Mooney won't be evicted. It just means he may be able to put it off for another 30 days.

Fang could not be reached for comment for this story. A man who answered the phone at her Flatbush Avenue liquor store said she was out of the country.

Mooney is counting on this slender hope.

"I'm trying to prolong it as long as I can," said Mooney, who will be in court again on Monday.

"And then I'll have to kill it, I guess."

"Flatbush Avenue needs a Mooney's pub."

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BOERUM HILL

Turn signal: Bright idea or a dim bulb?

By Mike McLaughlin
The Brooklyn Paper

The city has installed a left-turn signal to tame one of the deadly intersections on Atlantic Avenue, but some residents say the stretch from the East River to Flatbush Avenue will remain dangerous until speeding is reigned in.

The Hoyt Street Association catalyzed the city to install the left-turn signal last week by firing off a massive to-die-for officials after a two-car accident at Hoyt Street on Dec. 29.

There were no serious injuries, but the accident evoked memories of the October crash that killed a 75-year-old bystander and injured another person.

The Hoyt Street Association letter reached Borough President Markowitz, who asked the Department of Transportation to install the left-turn signal to make the intersection safer.

The left-turn light enables westbound vehicles on Atlantic Avenue to turn onto the one-way Hoyt Street before giving a green light to oncoming cars.

"This could be life-saving," said Margaret Coanac, president of the Hoyt Street Association.

Then again, the improved signal wouldn't have prevented the Dec. 29 accident, which happened when a car ran a red light. That's why some residents say the new turn signal (below) won't have a big impact on safety.

"It's isolated and there's no continuity," said Sandy Balboa, president of the Atlantic Avenue Betterment Association.

According to NYPD figures from 2006, Atlantic Avenue at Hoyt Street actually had far fewer accidents than other nearby intersections on Brooklyn's avenue of death and destruction.

That's why Balboa wants the DOT to rep-in-solve would be Mario Andretti, but a DOT spokesman said that lights are already set to keep most drivers at a legal velocity.

Besides, he added, speeding is a police matter.

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Grand Street may be rezoned to prevent high-rise construction.

WILLIAMSBURG

D'zone ain't so 'Grand'

By Adam F. Hutton
The Brooklyn Paper

Williamsburg residents are complaining that a city proposal to limit high-rise development along Grand Street is too little, too late.

The Department of City Planning says the rezoning plan would "preserve the scale of the neighborhood and reflect Grand Street's retail and residential feel," according to a spokeswoman.

But the low-rise feel on Grand Street, which was not protected in the 2005 rezoning that brought about the ongoing building boom on Williamsburg's waterfront, may be lost long before the city proposal makes it through the eight-month public-review process, critics said.

"The city was wrong to have left this area out of the rezoning," said Community Board 1 Land Use Committee Chairman Ward Dennis.

The situation on Grand Street recalls the ongoing conflict over the notorious "finger building," a Robert Scamio-designed residential tower on North Eighth Street that was grandfathered in under old zoning rules because it got its foundation in the ground before the new zoning went into effect.

Unless the Grand Street zoning change quickly makes it through the city's land use review process, such tall buildings could start cropping up, said Phil DePaulo of the New York City Planning Council, a zoning watchdog.

"Developers are going to get their foundations in, and they'll be protected when the change does go through," DePaulo said. "It'll be a nightmare."

Williamsburg's development mavens are all keeping an eye on the corner of Grand Street and Driggs Avenue, where architect Karl Fischer has designed a 16-story building. But Fischer may have to go back to the drawing board if the zoning change goes through.

"That project is just one example of what could happen if we don't get the rezoning done in a hurry," said CBI member Evan Thies.

But Ken Fisher — a lawyer and former City Council member who is representing the developer — said that rushing the rezoning might set precedents that lead to worse things than tall towers.

"Rezoning that is geared against a single project are never a good idea," said Fisher.

"We need to be thoughtful about the impact that rezoning has on sustainability. ... Height is not the only quality of the building that should be considered."

The proposed rezoning would limit the height of buildings in the area to 50 feet.

The Brooklyn Paper PARENT

Fifty is nifty if you're 'Smart'

The other day, Smartmum ran into her neighbor, Ciao Bella, who wanted to know which Weight Watchers meeting she's been attending. Smartmum told her that the Sunday morning meeting at the Montauk Club is top notch and that Melanie, the leader, is knowledgeable and inspiring. She even sends out a Thinspiration e-newsletter every week or so.

"That's my New Year's resolution," Ciao Bella told Smartmum. She's already lost 23 pounds on Weight Watchers, put 10 back on during the holidays and now wants to get back on track.

Way to go, Ciao Bella. Smartmum gave her loads of encouragement and hopes to see her at the Sunday meetings. The two women have lived

on the same block for more than 50 years — and in that Third Street way, feel a lot of affection for one another. Somehow, Ciao Bella knew that Smartmum was turning 50 and they got to talking about that, too.

"We should have a support group or something," Ciao Bella suggested.

That seemed like a great idea. Ciao Bella wasn't sure if it should be a support group or something a little more festive.

"Maybe a party or a gathering," she said.

This got Smartmum thinking. A part of her loved the idea of having a huge gathering of everyone in Park Slope who is turning 50. It could be like a secret society and called the Park Slope Half-Century Club and have a special handbook or something.

The whole thing started to sound really depressing. It would probably be a first-class

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Notice of Formation of Prospect Street Owners
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("SSNY") 12/14/2007. Office in Kings County;
SSNY designated agent for service of process with
copy mailed to Attn, Donald Capoccia, BFC
Partners LP, 325 Gold Street, 7th Fl., Brooklyn, NY
11201. All lawful business purposes.

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA, county of TROBIDEN, IN
THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE, DISTRICT COURT DIVISION 07-JT-41,
NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION IN RE: SHASHA
JMYEL COOK DOB: April 27, 2007 TO: ROMELL T. JOHNSON and
the unknown father of a female child born in Scotland County, North Carolina
on April 27, 2007. Respondents. Upon information and belief, this female child
was conceived approximately between January 1, 2006, and November 1,
2006, in Kings County, New York. TAKE NOTICE that a petition seeking
to terminate your parental rights has been filed in the above-entitled action.
You are required to answer the petition within forty (40) days after January 12,
2008, exclusive of said date. Your parental rights to the child will be
terminated upon your failure to answer the petition within the time pre-
scribed. This 12th day of January, 2008. Lisa D. Blackwell Purcell &
Griswold, LLP, 210 West Conroy Street, Post Office Box 1567, Lumberton,
North Carolina 28053. Telephone: (910) 277-1980. Attorneys for Petitioner,
Scotland County Department of Social Services. January 12, 19, & 26,
2008.

PUBLIC HEARING: IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted to the
Board of Standards and Appeals (BSA) Calendar No. 2007-07-827, on behalf
of Dikeman Realty Corp. to legalize an existing building on premises, which
lies partially in the bed of a mapped city street, contrary to General City Law
Section 35, at 158 Dikeman Street (Block 574, Lot 34) between Ferris and
Conover Streets, Community District 6, Brooklyn. The Landmarks/Land Use
Committee of Brooklyn Community Board 6 will conduct a Public Hearing:
Date: Thursday, January 24, 2008, Time: 6:00 pm, Place: South Brooklyn
Health Center, 120 Richards Street (Pioneer/King Streets), Brooklyn, New
York 11231. The Landmarks/Land Use Committee will convene directly fol-
lowing the Public Hearing to formulate its recommendation on this matter.
(*Application is available and can be reviewed at the Brooklyn Community
Board 6 District Office during regular business hours.)
(Peter Fleming, Land Use Chair, Robert Levine, Landmarks Chair)

Notice is hereby given that an Order entered by the Civil Court, Kings County on the 19th
day of December, 2007, bearing Index Number N001086/2007, a copy of which may be
examined at the Office of the Clerk, located at CIVIL COURT, KINGS COUNTY, 141
Livingston Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201, in room 007, grants me the right to assume the
name of Marina Sall. My present name is Marina Stollzowicz, a/k/a Marina Aleksandrovna
Stollzowicz, a/k/a Marina Sall-Landauers. My present address is 4670 156th Ave., Apt.
48, Brooklyn, NY 11219. My place of birth is Moscow, Russia. My date of birth is September
22, 1987.

Notice is hereby given that a license number 1198201 for beer and wine has been applied
for by the undersigned to sell beer & wine at retail in a restaurant under the Absolute Beverage
Control Law 210 Franklin Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11238 in Kings County for on premises con-
sumption.

Notice is hereby given that an Order entered by the Civil Court, Kings County on the 4th day
of January, 2008, bearing Index Number N001086/2007, a copy of which may be examined at
the Office of the Clerk, located at CIVIL COURT, KINGS COUNTY, 141 Livingston Street,
Brooklyn, New York 11201, in room 007, grants me the right to assume the name of Dawn
Ulanica Roberts-Henderson. My present name is Dawn Ulanica Roberts, a/k/a Dawn Ulanica
Henderson, a/k/a Dawn Ulanica Roberts. My present address is 436 E. 86th St., Brooklyn, NY
11238. My place of birth is Kingston, Jamaica. My date of birth is May 17, 1961.

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of January, 2008, bearing Index Number N001086/2007, a copy of which may be examined at
the Office of the Clerk, located at CIVIL COURT, KINGS COUNTY, 141 Livingston Street,
Brooklyn, New York 11201, in room 007, grants me the right to assume the name of Robert
Tony. My present name is Shi-Jie Tong, a/k/a Shi-Jie Tong, a/k/a Robert Tony Tong. My present
address is 1349 65th St., Brooklyn, NY 11219. My place of birth is Taiwan, China. My date of
birth is August 6, 1989.

Notice is hereby given that an Order entered by the Civil Court, Kings County on the 28th day
of December, 2007, bearing Index Number N001086/2007, a copy of which may be
examined at the Office of the Clerk, located at CIVIL COURT, KINGS COUNTY, 141
Livingston Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201, in room 007, grants me the right to assume the
name of Ferdinand Daniels IV. My present name is Ferdinand Daniels IV, a/k/a Ferdinand
Daniels, a/k/a Ferdinand Daniels. My present address is 238 Orange Ave., Brooklyn,
NY 11222. My place of birth is Norwalk, CT. My date of birth is November 24, 1980.

Notice is hereby given that an Order entered by the Civil Court, Kings County on the 3rd day
of January, 2008, bearing Index Number N001086/2007, a copy of which may be examined at
the Office of the Clerk, located at CIVIL COURT, KINGS COUNTY, 141 Livingston Street,
Brooklyn, New York 11201, in room 007, grants me the right to assume the name of Mario
Conradine Melendez Melendez. My present name is Edwin Alexander Melendez, a/k/a Edwin
Alexander Melendez, a/k/a Edwin Alexander Melendez. My present address is 133 Eighth,
Brooklyn, NY 11215. My place of birth is Mazatenango, Guatemala. My date of birth is October 11, 2006.

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